

## Promoting Dialogue

The stakeholders in the dams and development debate have agreed that the core values and strategic priorities recommended by the World Commission on Dams (WCD) as an analytical framework constitute a platform on which the Dams and Development Project (DDP) should build a new approach in planning and management of dams and their alternatives. DDP promotes informed and inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue as a means to consider the analytical framework for application in the national context. The aim of the dialogue is to produce recommendations on policies and procedures that will improve the existing framework of decision-making related to dams and their alternatives. The multi-stakeholder dialogue can help in arriving at decisions that are more acceptable to the public, ensure greater sustainability of the outcomes and minimise technical, environmental, social, and financial risks.



WCD core values and strategic priorities: the analytical framework

### National Multi-stakeholder Dialogues

Since the establishment of UNEP-DDP, many dialogues have been ongoing while more are emerging. A national dialogue is a country-led process, and therefore the focus of the dialogue differs from country to country, depending on its national priorities. However, similarities can be observed from the dialogues that have taken place to date. The general outline presented here is the result of these similarities.

#### 1 Initiating the dialogue process

Any organization involved in dams and development can take the initiative and become the lead organization in the process. The lead organisation should be committed to the inclusion of all other relevant stakeholder groups (including government agencies and civil society) and be the 'driver' of the dialogue.

A key role of the lead organization is to involve a multi-stakeholder core group that will decide on the substance of the dialogue process. Often, an initial multi-stakeholder workshop is organized to start the consideration of core values and strategic priorities as an analytical framework for decision-making.

UNEP-DDP can assist by providing technical guidance and financial support by, for instance:

- establishing an agenda, including a presentation of the WCD process and UNEP-DDP activities;
- facilitating a discussion of the core values and strategic priorities to analyse gaps and conformities and agree on requirements for improving the decision-making framework in the local context.

National multi-stakeholder dialogues often result in a statement endorsed by all participants about the need to improve the national decision-making framework on dams and their alternatives. They may also endorse the multi-stakeholder core group as a steering or coordinating committee, and identify a way forward to discuss the analytical framework and to come up with recommendations for policies and procedures.

#### 2 Detailed analysis of the analytical framework in the national context

Workshop participants should decide on the nature of the follow-up process. A common next step is the elaboration of a scoping report by a small group of experts with different backgrounds. The scoping report builds upon the outcomes of the first workshop and analyses in detail the core values and strategic priorities, as applied to the country's legal framework and existing practices.

It also assesses conformities and gaps and makes relevant proposals. During this phase, UNEP-DDP can assist by:

- providing limited funding to support the group of local experts writing the scoping report,
- reviewing the Terms of Reference for a group assigned to prepare a scoping report and drafts versions, and providing suggestions for further improvement.

### 3. Issuing recommendations

The recommendations of the scoping report should be subject to a broad multi-stakeholder consultation. A second multi-stakeholder workshop is usually convened for this purpose. Although government is often the main recipient of these recommendations, other influential stakeholder groups can be addressed as well. Continuous involvement of all stakeholders throughout the process should increase the likelihood of governments and national assemblies considering the recommendations.

## UNEP-DDP Support

A key eligibility requirement for assistance from the DDP is the all-inclusive multi-stakeholder format of the dialogue, with a well-balanced representation of different stakeholders. Depending on the outcomes of the dialogue and upon the request of governments and financing agencies, the DDP assists in improving guidelines and criteria for dams and their alternatives through the dissemination and application of the practical tools developed by the project. Once consensus has been reached over the recommendations emerging from the multi-stakeholder meeting, UNEP-DDP involvement in the process will be phased out.

### Some Useful Tips:

- Adhere to the multi-stakeholder approach. Note that this may not be equally perceived by all stakeholders and requires concerted efforts.
- Ensure the involvement of all key stakeholders including committed participation of government agencies.
- Ensure the establishment of a time-bound process with concrete outputs.
- Link the dialogue process with other ongoing initiatives, e.g. development of national water policy strategies or environmental laws.

| DDP INVOLVEMENT: GUIDANCE, TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT, MONITORING |   |   |  | CONSOLIDATED LOCAL DIALOGUE PROCESS   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
|  | MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH  | DIALOGUE ACTIVITY   | DIALOGUE PROCESS   |   |
| STAGES   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness about WCD and DDP</li> <li>2. Awareness about the need for improved decision-making agreed and internalised</li> <li>3. Consolidation of a leading MS core group</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MS initial consultation workshop on WCD analytical framework based on its core values and strategic priorities</li> <li>2. Other types of activity dealing with dams and development</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analysis of the WCD analytical framework in the local context to assess conformities and gaps (Scoping report)</li> <li>2. Formulation of country-specific recommendations on policy and procedures to improve decision-making</li> <li>3. MS workshop/meeting to discuss issues and recommendations</li> </ol>  | Implementation of the recommendations into policy and regulatory frameworks   |
| INDICATORS   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Representative stakeholders' organizations and persons identified</li> <li>2. A core MS group established</li> <li>3. Goals and objectives agreed, i.e. improved decision-making on the basis of a MS platform</li> <li>4. Tentative timeframe set</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Core MS group actively involved in the organization</li> <li>2. Government involved in the activity/process</li> <li>3. Balanced participation of representatives of all major stakeholder groups</li> <li>4. Report of the meeting available</li> <li>5. Timeframe revised and agreed by stakeholders</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinating MS group is leading the process</li> <li>2. Government involved</li> <li>3. Process, goals, outputs, and timeframe agreed</li> <li>4. Minutes of meetings, decisions available</li> <li>5. Reports analysing the core values and strategic priorities in the local context available</li> <li>6. Recommendations for improvement of regulatory frameworks endorsed by all stakeholders</li> </ol> | Recommendations formally received by the government and other stakeholders<br><br>Policies formally integrated into the regulatory frameworks |



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